

House Republican Press Release

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**Mayor DeStefano, Rep. Farr, Police Chiefs, Victims Urge Support for
Traffic Camera Enforcement Measure**



*Red light camera technology can improve safety
for residents statewide*

Mayors, state legislators, chiefs of police and a victim who was involved in an accident stemming from a traffic signal violation and leaders from the National Campaign to Stop Red Light Running today urged Connecticut lawmakers to enact traffic camera enforcement legislation.

At a news conference today at the Legislative Office Building in Hartford, the officials called for the enactment of a measure pending before the Connecticut General Assembly that would enable municipalities to utilize new technologies to augment traffic safety and enforcement efforts. The event took place at 2 p.m. in Room 1C of the Legislative Office Building in Hartford.

“The purpose of these devices is to save lives,” said state Rep. Robert Farr (R-West Hartford). “Motorists who don’t stop for red lights at intersections are one of the major causes of accidents in Connecticut. If Connecticut municipalities could install automated traffic enforcement devices that photograph drivers running red lights, it would provide irrefutable evidence that could be used in court to prosecute violators.”

According to the latest data from the Federal Highway Safety Administration, in 2002, drivers who ran red lights caused about 207,000 crashes; 178,000 injuries; and nearly 1,000 fatalities. In a New Haven study the same year, there were 870 red light violations in 48 hours at three intersections.

“In the New Haven study, it was determined someone was running a red light every three minutes – and that was just at three intersections,” said Mayor John DeStefano, Jr. “We know that 95% of motorists say that when they enter an intersection they fear being hit by a car that’s running a red light. Enacting this legislation would not only make our streets safer, it would allow police officers to spend more time on community policing, as opposed to monitoring intersections.”

“Photographic enforcement is an effective tool for enhancing public safety. HB 5744 would keep with current best practices in many other cities across America and allow Connecticut towns and cities the local option to utilize such technology for the well-being

and safety of their citizens,” said Bob Labanara from the Connecticut Conference of Municipalities.

The proposed legislation (House Bill 5744, *An Act Concerning Enforcement of Speeding and Traffic Control Signal Violations*) would enable municipalities to utilize new technologies to augment traffic safety and enforcement efforts. The voluntary program would allow municipalities to utilize existing parking ticket enforcement programs to ticket drivers who run red lights.